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Complete Symphonies of Beethoven

CONDUCTED BY

Felix Weingartner

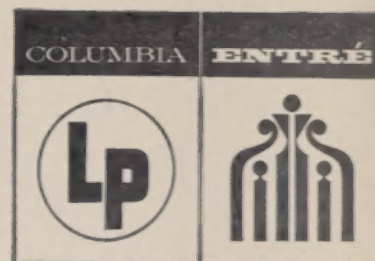


PHOTOGRAPH: ELLEN AUERBACH

Complete

SYMPHONIES OF BEETHOVEN

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FELIX WEINGARTNER

■ The issuance on Columbia Entré "Lp" Records of all nine of the Beethoven symphonies in the memorable performances under the direction of the late Felix Weingartner is an artistic and technical event of considerable magnitude.

At the time of his death in 1942, Weingartner was universally recognized as among the truly great conductors of his time, and his readings of the works of Beethoven and Brahms in particular were of such high quality as to establish him as one of the outstanding authorities on those two composers.

These Weingartner performances, recorded over approximately a twelve year period beginning in 1926, in halls of superb acoustical quality in Vienna and London, have long been familiar to and admired by music-lovers on Columbia 78 rpm shellac records. It is in response to countless requests that these superlative performances are now made available on Columbia Entré "Lp" records.

In transferring these performances to "Lp", advantage was taken of all of the modern advances in the technique of reproducing disc records. The metal molds, or matrices, made directly from the master matrices which were derived from the original wax recordings were used. Specially ground diamond styli were used in the reproducers, assuring optimum fit to the grooves. As a result, all of the fine detail of the original recordings is revealed in these "Lp" records.

Felix Weingartner was born in 1863 and he died in 1942, a few weeks before his seventy-ninth birthday. During his long and distinguished career he was Court Kapellmeister of opera and director of the Royal orchestra in Berlin (1891-1898), conductor at the Hofoper in Vienna (1908-1911), director of the Basle Conservatory and conductor of the orchestra there, and conductor at the Staatsoper in Vienna beginning in 1935. He made several visits to the United States—in 1905 to conduct the New York Philharmonic and the New York Symphony, and during the 1912-1913 season to conduct opera in Boston.

His high-mindedness as an interpreter is clear in one of his own statements: "The secret of the artistic rendering of musical compositions, and hence the secret of the conductor's art, lies in the style. The repro-

ducing artist, in this case the conductor, must have absorbed into himself, so to speak, the peculiarity of each master and each masterpiece, and his rendering must be subordinate to this peculiarity even in the smallest details... One of the essential conditions of the style of an execution must be *clearness*."

BEETHOVEN: SYMPHONY NO. 1 IN C MAJOR, Op. 21

Felix Weingartner conducting the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra

■ Weingartner refers to Beethoven's First Symphony as "this cheerful work, which was evidently written under the influence of Haydn's style."

The exact date of the work is not known, but sketches for the final movement have been found amongst some student exercises Beethoven wrote in 1795. It was first performed in Vienna on April 2, 1800.

The delightful music has been called "a fitting farewell to the Eighteenth Century." Tovey remarks that it has "more of the true Nineteenth Century Beethoven in its depths than he allows to appear upon the surface," and he calls its style "that of the Comedy of Manners, as translated by Mozart into the music of his operas and of his most lighthearted works of symphonic and chamber music."

The novelty of the First Symphony lies chiefly in the introduction to the first movement where the matter of tonality upset the critics of Beethoven's day, and in the third movement, labeled a *Menuetto* but actually more akin to the vigorous *Scherzo* Beethoven was later to develop and make so peculiarly his own. Speaking of the introduction to the first movement, Aphorpe says that "if there was any one key to which young composers were warned against modulating until near the end of a composition, this key was the subdominant; yet...in fact, the symphony may be said to begin at once with a 'modulation to the subdominant'."

Berlioz referred to the third movement as "the one truly original thing" in the Symphony, calling the section music "of exquisite freshness, lightness, and grace."

BEETHOVEN: SYMPHONY NO. 2 IN D MAJOR, Op. 36

Felix Weingartner conducting the London Symphony Orchestra

■ "It is so simple and the orchestral coloring is so bright," said Felix Weingartner of Beethoven's Second Symphony, "that an animated mode of execution seems to come almost of itself. Joyous youth, cheerful fervor and unbroken strength seem to constitute the foundations of its being. To approach it in a spirit of pale reflection is to spoil it at once."

The Second Symphony was completed at Heiligenstadt during the Autumn of 1802. It was, therefore, a product of one of the most bitterly tragic periods of Beethoven's life, the time of that remarkable essay, the Heiligenstadt Testament, in which Beethoven unforgettably voiced his despair at his increasing deafness and cried out, "O God—grant me at last but one day of pure joy—it is so long since real joy has echoed in my heart."

Miraculously, the Second Symphony reflects nothing of the composer's depression. On the contrary it is, as Berlioz put it, "smiling throughout."

Critics of Beethoven's time found the first movement "grand" and "colossal." The following *Larghetto* Tovey calls "one of the most luxurious slow movements in the world." "It is a pure and frank song," says Berlioz of the chief melody of this section, "a ravishing picture of innocent pleasure which is scarcely shadowed by a few melancholy accents." The *Scherzo* is unreservedly joyous; Berlioz writes of its "fantastic capriciousness." The final movement is high-spirited and bold.

BEETHOVEN: SYMPHONY NO. 3 IN E-FLAT MAJOR, Op. 55 ("Eroica")

Felix Weingartner conducting the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra

■ The story of Beethoven dedicating his Third Symphony to Napoleon and then tearing the dedication up in anger when Napoleon became Emperor of France is probably the best known anecdote about Beethoven, and it is probably the least important fact about the work.

What is important about this great and powerful music is that it hymns triumphantly, as few works before or after it have, the heroic spirit in man. Wagner wrote eloquently on this point, saying: "The desig-

nation 'heroic' is to be taken in its widest sense, and in no wise to be conceived as relating merely to a military hero. If we broadly connote by 'hero' the whole, the full-fledged *man*, in whom are present all the purely human feelings of love, of grief, of force—in their highest fill and strength, then we shall rightly grasp the subject which the artist lets appeal to us in the speaking accents of his tone work. The artistic space of this work is filled with all the varied, intercrossing feelings of a strong, a consummate Individuality, to which nothing human is a stranger, but which includes within itself all truly Human, and utters it in such a fashion that, after frankly manifesting every noble passion, it reaches a final rounding of its nature, wherein the most feeling softness is wedded with the most energetic force."

The first movement is filled with noble and dramatic conflict—the heroic spirit in its battle with the world's cruelty. The second movement, the famous *Marcia funebre*, has meant many things to many commentators. To Marx it was Night spreading her mantle over a battlefield filled with the corpses of those who had died for glory. To Berlioz it represented not a battlefield but "profound reflections, melancholy recollections, imposing ceremonies." Tovey, attempting to probe Beethoven's extra-musical thought, writes of this movement, "Death must be faced by heroes and hero-worshippers, and if what heroes know about it is of any value to mankind, they may as well tell us of their knowledge while they are alive. And the mere courage of battle is not enough; it is the stricken nations whose sorrow must be faced." The *Scherzo* is marked by a resurgence of power. The entire work reaches its soaring climax in the triumphant final movement, which is in effect variations on a theme Beethoven had previously used in other works, notably the incidental music for *Prometheus*.

Beethoven began his Third Symphony in 1802 and completed it in 1804. It was given its first public performance in Vienna in the Spring of 1805.

Some years later, when Beethoven had written all but his Ninth Symphony, and he was asked which of these eight works was his favorite, he answered, without hesitation, "the *Eroica*."

(CONTINUED INSIDE BACK COVER)

BEETHOVEN: SYMPHONY NO. 4 IN B-FLAT MAJOR, Op. 60

Felix Weingartner conducting the London Philharmonic Orchestra

■ "A fresh and spirited performance of this piece will hardly allow a single doubt (of its greatness) to arise," wrote Felix Weingartner of Beethoven's Fourth Symphony.

The work was written during the Summer of 1806 while Beethoven was visiting his friends the Brunswicks at their country estate. It was first performed in Vienna in March of the following year.

Robert Schumann, thinking of the Fourth in connection with the Third and Fifth, referred to it as "a slender Greek maiden between two Norse giants." Berlioz held the general character of the Fourth to be "generally lively, nimble, joyous, or of a heavenly sweetness." Grove, filled with enthusiasm for the music, declared that "a more consistent and attractive whole cannot be" and that the movements "fit in their places like the limbs and features of a lovely statue; and, full of fire and invention as they are, all is subordinated to conciseness, grace, and beauty." John N. Burk refers to it charmingly as "a symphony of dreaming, the fixing in music of a mood of willing subjection to the affectionate regard of those about him."

The most enamoring portion of the Fourth Symphony is unquestionably the *Adagio*, the beautiful second movement. "It escapes analysis," wrote Berlioz. "It is so pure in form, the melodic expression is so angelic and of such irresistible tenderness, that the prodigious art of the workmanship disappears completely. You are seized, from the first measure, by an emotion which at the end becomes overwhelming in its intensity; and it is only in the works of one of these giants of poetry that we can find a point of comparison with this sublime page of the giant of music."

It has been pointed out that the final movement of the Fourth Symphony looks forward to the *finale* of the Seventh in its enormous force although it lacks the fury of the later work. Tovey calls it "unsurpassably adroit and playful."

BEETHOVEN: SYMPHONY NO. 5 IN C MINOR, Op. 67

Felix Weingartner conducting the London Philharmonic Orchestra

■ Beethoven's magnificent Fifth Symphony has been hailed by Paul Henry Láng as "the most convincing, the most miraculously concentrated symphonic structure in the whole musical literature." Surely it is the most familiar of all Beethoven's symphonies, and it acquired added fame during the Second World War as a symbol of victory, not only because of a certain resemblance between the four-note figure that dominates the first movement and the Morse Code signal for V. Taut, powerful, eloquent, it is as admirably constructed as a great play. It moves dramatically and inevitably from the stormy conflict of the first movement, through the meditateness of the second, the terror of the third, to the exuberant affirmation of the *finale*.

In Berlioz' opinion, it was the first of Beethoven's symphonies in which the composer "gave the reins to his vast imagination, without taking for guide or aid a

foreign thought." It seems to come, wrote Berlioz, "directly and solely from the genius of Beethoven; he develops in it his own intimate thought; his secret sorrows, his concentrated rage, his reveries charged with a dejection, oh, so sad, his visions at night, his bursts of enthusiasm."

One disputed story has it that Beethoven himself said of the aforementioned four-note figure that begins the Symphony, "thus Fate knocks at the door"; and therefore the whole work is sometimes known as the *Fate* Symphony. Another tale is that it was inspired by the song of a bird.

Whatever inspired the theme, the movement it introduces is possessed of a wild and demonic energy—"a frenetic delirium which explodes in frightful cries," as Berlioz expresses it. The second movement is a noble and melancholy contemplation, in form variations on two themes. The *Scherzo* establishes a mood of mystery and terror that reminded Berlioz of a sinister scene in Goethe's *Faust*. Suddenly, at the close of this movement, comes one of the greatest strokes in Beethoven, the mysterious bridge passage leading into the exultant shout that begins the *finale*, a glorious ascent from the darker recesses of the soul to the light of courageous, challenging life.

The Fifth Symphony was completed in 1807. It was given its first performance in Vienna under the composer's direction in December of the following year.

BEETHOVEN: SYMPHONY NO. 6 IN F MAJOR, Op. 68 ("Pastoral")

Felix Weingartner conducting the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

■ The Sixth Symphony is another striking example of Beethoven's infinite variety. Having achieved a work of monumental power and drama in the Fifth Symphony (1807), he produced in the Sixth Symphony (completed in 1808) music of complete relaxation, radiance and lightheartedness.

The Sixth Symphony is also one of Beethoven's rare ventures into program music, although he called it "an expression of feelings rather than painting." The composer provided the titles for the various sections—(1) *Awakening of serene impressions on arriving in the country: Allegro non troppo.* (2) *Scene by the brookside: Andante molto moto.* (3) *Jolly gathering of country folk: Allegro; in tempo d'allegro; Thunderstorm; Tempest: Allegro.* (4) *Shepherd's Song: Glad some and thankful feelings after the storm: Allegretto.*

Beethoven's love of Nature was deep and intimate. As Vincent d'Indy has written perceptively, "Nature was to Beethoven not only a consoler for his sorrows and disenchantments; she was also a friend with whom he took pleasure in familiar talk, the only intercourse to which his deafness presented no obstacle."

To some listeners the first movement suggests the tranquility of a Poussin landscape. They hear in it the piping of shepherds and the sound of chattering birds.

Tovey calls the slow movement "one of the most powerful things in music" and to prove his point he remarks, "A slow movement in full sonata form which at every point asserts its deliberate intention to be lazy and to say whatever occurs to it twice in succession, and which in so doing never loses flow and never falls out of proportion, such a slow movement is as strong as an

Atlantic liner that could bear taking out of water and supporting on its two ends."

The succeeding section is full of jollity and delightfully naïve rustic humor, with the music at times suggesting the sound of an untrained peasant band playing for the dancing of friends. The gaiety is interrupted by the thunderstorm. This subsides after a dramatic climax, and we hear the song of the shepherd, following which the music swells into a tender and serene hymn to Nature.

BEETHOVEN: SYMPHONY NO. 7 IN A MAJOR, Op. 92

Felix Weingartner conducting the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra

■ Beethoven's Seventh Symphony has been called "the most beautiful symphony in the world." It has also been dubbed "the Romantic Symphony" . . . "rightly," says Tovey, "in so far as romance is a term which, like humor, every self-respecting person claims to understand, while no two people understand it in the same way."

That it is absolute music without programmatic content has not deterred commentators from reading extra-musical meanings into it. One thought it "a tale of Moorish knighthood"; another detected the musical expression of a political revolution; still another considered the slow movement "the love-dream of a sumptuous odalisque." Even Felix Weingartner looked with favor on his first music teacher's conception of the slow movement as "a look into a magic mirror in which nothing can be seen at first; then forms appear, approach us and look at us with eyes which have seen another world, then pass on and disappear again . . . and only the dark surface of the mirror remains."

The inexorable, overwhelming rhythmic drive of the music caused Wagner to call it "the apotheosis of the dance, the happiest realization of the movements of the body in ideal form." Because of that same dynamic force in the music Beethoven's contemporaries, or some of them, thought the Symphony the result of inebriety. To this, many years later, Romain Rolland replied keenly, "The work of an inebriated man indeed it was, but one intoxicated with poetry and genius; one who said to himself, 'I am the Bacchus who crushes delicious nectar for mankind. It is I who give the divine frenzy to mankind.'"

For Lawrence Gilman this wonderful music had "the deathless charm of all motion that is unsexed, spontaneous, perfectly released." For him the music was full at times "of the ungovernable ecstasy of some pristine and magically recovered Spring, the sudden laughter of dryads in immemorial woods, the exquisite gaiety of the vernal earth; or it has at other times the grave pace of some commemorative ritual, evoking an elegiacal and mournful beauty, 'as if veils were dropped, one by one, on a great ceremony.'"

To Philip Hale should go the last word: "The rhapsodists have had their say; the commentators have pried and conjectured; the later symphonies are still sublime in their grandeur. They well-nigh express the inexpressible."

The Seventh Symphony was finished during the Summer of 1812, and it was first performed in Vienna early in the December of 1813, Beethoven conducting.

BEETHOVEN: SYMPHONY NO. 8 IN F MAJOR, Op. 93

Felix Weingartner conducting the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra

■ The Eighth Symphony, which Felix Weingartner calls "one of Beethoven's ripest masterpieces," is in a sense a companion piece to the Seventh Symphony, the two having been completed the same year, 1812. And yet, the Eighth differs as greatly from the Seventh as the Fourth from the Third and the Sixth from the Fifth. The Eighth Symphony, remarks John N. Burk, "finds its maker in a state of mind which has turned from grandeur to a more personal, a more heart-warming exuberance." Hale notes that the work is characterized "by mad jollity, and a playfulness that at times approaches buffoonery." But he observes in it too "exquisite musical thoughts . . . passages that for a moment . . . reach the heights."

It has been said that the second movement was inspired by a three-voice round sung in honor of the inventor of the metronome, Mälzel, at a dinner given to Beethoven in 1812 before he left Vienna for the country. Berlioz wrote of this movement, "It is one of those productions for which neither model nor pendant can be found. This sort of thing falls entire from heaven into the composer's brain. He writes it at a single dash, and we are amazed at hearing it."

BEETHOVEN: SYMPHONY NO. 9 IN D MINOR, Op. 125 ("Choral")

Felix Weingartner conducting the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and Vienna State Opera Chorus with Louise Helletsgruber, Soprano; Rosette Anday, Contralto; Georg Maikl, Tenor; Richard Mayr, Bass

■ Beethoven's Ninth Symphony is, in the opinion of Felix Weingartner, "not only the greatest, but also the most difficult of orchestral compositions." To achieve "a clear and correct, but at the same time sympathetic and powerful execution of this Symphony belongs to the most sublime tasks of the conductor's art," wrote Weingartner who went on to say, that "here, more than in any other of his works Beethoven found himself handicapped by the limited resources of the orchestra, and here more than elsewhere we can see how his deafness made it difficult for him to judge correctly of the different sound effects. That in spite of these hindrances he has created in the *Adagio* a perfect masterpiece of instrumentation, only makes us gaze afresh in wondering admiration at this unique genius."

The Ninth was completed in 1824, and it is unquestionably the most ambitious of Beethoven's symphonies if for no other reason than it is the first in the history of music to use the human voice. The famous *finale*—the movement for soloists, chorus and orchestra—is a setting of Schiller's *Ode to Joy*, a hymn to the brotherhood of man.

The concept of the *finale* is stupendous; to some it falls short of complete success in execution because of human limitations. The slow movement, on the other hand, is one of Beethoven's loftiest and most successful achievements. Hale speaks of the "world-embracing humanity" in this movement; and Wagner exclaimed, "How differently these tones speak to our hearts! How pure, how celestially soothing they are as they melt the defiance, the wild impulse harassed by despair into a soft, melancholy feeling!"

Notes by MORRIS HASTINGS

COLUMBIA ENTRÉ (LP)

BEETHOVEN
SYMPHONY NO. 1
IN C MAJOR, Op. 21
FELIX WEINGARTNER conducting the
VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

RL 6636

NONBREAKABLE
(ex "Lp" 38745)

1. I - Adagio molto; Allegro con brio
2. II - Andante cantabile con moto
3. III - Menuetto (Allegro molto e vivace)
and Trio
4. IV - Adagio; Allegro molto e vivace

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CXIP38745-1C

CYLP38717-16

COLUMBIA ENTRÉ



BEETHOVEN
SYMPHONY NO. 2
IN D MAJOR, Op. 36

FELIX WEINGARTNER conducting the
LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA


RL 6637

NONBREAKABLE
(ex"LP" 38747)

1. I - Adagio molto; Allegro con brio
2. II - Larghetto
3. III - Scherzo (Allegro) and Trio
4. IV - Allegro molto

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XLP 7642-20

COLUMBIA **ENTRÉ** 

BEETHOVEN
SYMPHONY NO. 3
IN E-FLAT MAJOR,
Op. 55 ("Eroica")
FELIX WEINGARTNER conducting the
VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA


RL 6638
NONBREAKABLE

SIDE 1
(ex "Lp" 7642)

1. I - Allegro con brio
2. II - Funeral March
(adagio assai)

"Columbia" and "Entré" Trade Marks Reg. U. S. Pat. Off. M. 2-23-35. Made in U. S. A.

CXLP 7643-2F

COLUMBIA **ENTRÉ** 


BEETHOVEN
SYMPHONY NO. 3
IN E-FLAT MAJOR,
Op. 55 ("Eroica")

FELIX WEINGARTNER conducting the
VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

RL 6638
NONBREAKABLE

SIDE 2
(ex "Lp" 7643)

1. III - Scherzo (allegro vivace) -
Trio
2. IV - Finale (allegro molto -
poco andante)

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CYIP38748-10

COLUMBIA **ENTRÉ**

BEETHOVEN
SYMPHONY NO. 4
IN B-FLAT MAJOR,
Op. 60
FELIX WEINGARTNER conducting the
LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA




RL 6637

NONBREAKABLE
(ex"LP" 38748)

1. I - Adagio; Allegro vivace
2. II - Adagio
3. III - Menuetto and Trio (Allegro vivace)
4. IV - Allegro ma non troppo

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CYLP38746-1E

COLUMBIA ENTRÉ 

BEETHOVEN
SYMPHONY NO. 5
IN C MINOR, Op. 67
FELIX WEINGARTNER conducting the
LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

RL 6636

NONBREAKABLE
(ex "Lp" 38746)

1. I - Allegro con brio
2. II - Andante con moto
3. III - Scherzo (Allegro vivace)
- IV - Finale (Allegro)

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COLUMBIA ENTRÉ (LP)

BEETHOVEN
SYMPHONY NO. 6
IN F MAJOR,
Op. 68 ("Pastoral")

FELIX WEINGARTNER conducting the
ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

RL 6639
NONBREAKABLE

SIDE 1
(cx "Lp" 8972)

- I - Allegro ma non troppo (The
awakening of joyful feelings
upon arrival in the country)
- II - Andante molto moto (The Brook)

YLP 8972-2J

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COLUMBIA ENTRÉ

BEETHOVEN
SYMPHONY NO. 6
IN F MAJOR,
Op. 68 ("Pastoral")

FELIX WEINGARTNER conducting the
ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

RL 6639
NONBREAKABLE

SIDE 2
(ex "Lp" 8973)


III - Allegro (Village Festival)

IV - Allegro (The Storm)

V - Allegretto (Shepherd's Song)

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CXIP 8973-2E

COLUMBIA ENTRE 

BEETHOVEN
SYMPHONY NO. 7
IN A MAJOR,
Op. 92

FELIX WEINGARTNER conducting the
VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

RL 6640
NONBREAKABLE

SIDE 1
(ex "Lp" 8880)

1. I - Poco sostenuto; Vivace

2. II - Allegretto

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CXIP 8888-2E

COLUMBIA ENTRÉ



BEETHOVEN
SYMPHONY NO. 7
IN A MAJOR,
Op. 92

FELIX WEINGARTNER conducting the
VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

RL 6640
NONBREAKABLE

SIDE 2
(ex"LP" 8889)

1. III - Presto (assai meno presto)
2. IV - Allegro con brio

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CMLP 8889-2F

COLUMBIA ENTRÉ

BEETHOVEN
SYMPHONY NO. 8
IN F MAJOR, Op. 93

FELIX WEINGARTNER conducting the
VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

RL 6641

NONBREAKABLE
(ex "Lp" 8563)

1. I - Allegro vivace e con brio
2. II - Allegretto scherzando
3. III - Menuetto
4. IV - Finale (Allegro vivace)

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CVP 8563-01

COLUMBIA ENTRE

BEETHOVEN
SYMPHONY NO. 9
IN D MINOR, Op. 125
("Choral") (Beginning)
FELIX WEINGARTNER conducting the
VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

LP

RL 6642

NONBREAKABLE
(ex-Lp 8612)

I - Allegro ma non troppo, un
poco maestoso

XLP 8612-1E

XLP 8613-1C

COLUMBIA **ENTRÉ**

LP

BEETHOVEN
SYMPHONY NO. 9
IN D MINOR, Op. 125
("Choral") (Continuation)

FELIX WEINGARTNER conducting the
VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

RL 6642

NONBREAKABLE
(ex"Lp" 8613)

1. II - Scherzo (Molto vivace)
2. III - Adagio molto e cantabile

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XLP 8628 30

COLUMBIA ENTRÉ



BEETHOVEN
SYMPHONY NO. 9
IN D MINOR, Op. 125
("Choral") (Conclusion)
FELIX WEINGARTNER conducting the
VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA and
VIENNA STATE OPERA CHORUS with

RL 6641

NONBREAKABLE
(ex "Lp" 8628)

LOUISE HELLETSGRUBER, Soprano, ROSETTE ANDAY,
Contralto, GEORG MAIKL, Tenor, RICHARD MAYR, Bass

IV - Presto; Allegro assai
Choral Finale on Schiller's
"Ode to Joy"

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